



# South Coast Air Quality Management District

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## ETHNIC COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

December 12, 2007

### MEETING MINUTES

#### **PRESENT**

#### **ABSENT**

#### **ECAG FACILITATOR**

Dr. Pom Pom Ganguli, Asst. DEO/Public Advisor

#### **AFRICAN-AMERICAN CAUCUS**

Stan Lee

Patricia Byrd  
Tod Short  
Rosa Washington

#### **LATINO CAUCUS**

Fernando Del Rio, Chair  
Ramon Diaz  
Harold Martinez  
Anastacio Medina  
Rose Montoya-Lona  
Daniel Morales

#### **ASIAN-PACIFIC ISLANDER CAUCUS**

Tom Chang, Chair  
Paul Choe  
David Sakurai

#### **NATIVE AMERICAN**

John Bacheller

#### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Earl Elrod, Board Assistant (*Yates*)  
David Madsen, Sr. Public Information Specialist  
Debra Reed, Sr. Public Information Specialist

#### **AQMD STAFF**

Lourdes Cordova Martinez, Community Relations Manager  
Tracy Goss, Program Supervisor

Leticia Gutierrez, Secretary  
Carolyn Hamilton, Public Affairs Specialist  
John Olvera, Sr. Deputy District Counsel  
Jill Whynot, Director of Strategic Initiatives

ECAG Minutes – December 12, 2007

**1. Call to Order/Opening Remarks**

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Pom Pom Ganguli at 1:20 p.m.

**2. Approval of December 14, 2007 Minutes**  
**Review of Follow-Up /Action Items**

The minutes were approved as presented. There were no follow-up action items.

**3. Caucus and Subcommittee Reports**

Member Fernando del Rio, Chair of the Latino Caucus, mentioned the caucus had met and are anticipating another member from the Orange County area. They are also aggressively recruiting female members from the San Bernardino and Riverside areas.

**4. Presentation on Proposed Rule 445 – Wood Burning Devices**

Jill Whynot, Director of Strategic Initiatives, brought members up-to-date on Proposed Rule 445, which is a wood stove and fireplace rule. The California Health and Safety Code states that there is a legal specification to adopt any rule that other air districts have adopted which are more stringent than the South Coast AQMD's rules. Also, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) is contemplating a Suggested Control Measure (SCM) which would include the entire state.

Ms. Whynot stated that the rule development for Proposed Rule 445 began two years ago, but was reinitiated after the 2007 Air Quality Management Plan was adopted. There are a total of 5 million wood burning stoves and fireplaces in the South Coast region. There are 1.9 million wood burning stoves, with 1.4 million using uncontrolled fireplaces. This rule will apply to new and existing residential and commercial buildings with permanently installed devices. Gas wood burning devices will be installed for new construction only, beginning six months after rule adoption.

Ms. Whynot stated there are other replacement methods, such as pellet-fueled, but the cleanest fueling is dedicated natural gas. Member Stan Lee inquired about the composition of the pellets. Tracy Goss, Program Supervisor, informed members the pellets are comprised of compressed sawdust and are accompanied by a device which feeds the pellets into the flames periodically.

Ms. Whynot reminded members the type of wood burned makes a difference in the amount of smoke that is created. Most wood is seasoned which means that the moisture content is less than 20%. The proposed rule would require sales of only seasoned wood between July and February. If there are still exceedances of the federal PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard in 2013, curtailments would be called for in specific areas where air quality is forecast to be above the federal standard. The federal health standard is 35 micrograms per cubic meter during a 24-hour period.

Outreach regarding curtailments in 2012, will be done by means of the website and media outlets. This will be done in the winter season and only in certain areas. Initially, there will be a fairly soft enforcement of this rule. The fines generated will be imposed per offense, with a maximum of \$500. Also proposed is an incentive program using funding from Rule 1309.1 – Mitigation Fees. This is a pilot program geared to retrofitting existing fireplaces with the assistance of AQMD to offset some of the expense. A Public Consultation Meeting is scheduled for January 2008 and the Public Hearing will follow in March 2008.

Member Anastacio Medina expressed concern from the health perspective stating wood smoke is a strong asthma trigger and requested approximate numbers of asthmatics which would be affected if the rule doesn't pass. Ms. Whynot will see what information could be added to the staff report.

Member Diaz noted that this rule could be beneficial; however, it will lead to tons of wood not being used. Dr. Ganguli reminded the group that much of unburned wood is recycled into other ecosystems.

Member Lee inquired about costs associated with converting fireplaces to gas. Ms. Whynot gave an estimate of \$100 - \$500 and mentioned that AQMD is partnering with the Gas Company on a buy-down program.

Member Chang inquired if mandatory curtailment was statewide or just for certain areas. Ms. Whynot specified that it pertains to limited geography. Member Del Rio expressed concern regarding barbecues, but was assured that appliances not permanently affixed to the property or used for cooking will be affected by the proposed rule.

Lourdes Martinez posed a question on the subject of the purchase of wood stoves. Ms. Whynot confirmed that the purchase of an EPA certified wood stove is permitted. There are few wood-burning stoves in the area, but they are labeled, and exist in higher elevations.

## **5. 2007 ECAG Accomplishments & 2008 Goals & Objectives**

Ms. Martinez went over a summary of different topics discussed at the ECAG meetings in 2007, in conjunction with the goals which address the mission of the group. Ms. Martinez mentioned that a MATES III discussion will be presented to

ECAG in January or February 2008, followed by a presentation on Climate Change in March 2008. Member Lee requested quarterly legislative updates.

***ACTION: Bring back 2008 Goals & Objectives for further discussion.***

**6. 2008 Meeting Calendar**

ECAG members agreed to continue to meet every second Wednesday of the month. The calendar was approved by all Committee Members.

**7. Review last Governing Board Meeting and Discussion on Upcoming Governing Board Agenda Items**

Dr. Ganguli mentioned that several schools were recognized for their work during the wildfire crisis. At the January 4, 2008 Board meeting, the Chairman will deliver his proposed 2008 initiatives for discussion.

**8. Other Business**

Ms. Martinez reminded members of the upcoming El Monte Town Hall Meeting on December 17, 2007, at 6:30 p.m., at Rio Vista Elementary School.

**9. Public Comment**

There was none.

**10. Adjournment**

There being no further comment, the meeting was adjourned at 2:22 p.m.